

What is claimed is:

1. A method of preparing a material comprising a hydrophilic, amphoteric or anionic polymer having antimicrobial activity comprising the steps of

5 a) preparing a solution comprising an organic solvent and a source of silver in a quantity sufficient to provide a desired silver concentration in said material;

b) subjecting said polymer to said solution for a time sufficient to incorporate said desired silver concentration into said polymer; and

10 c) subjecting said material, during or after step (b) to one or more agents which facilitate the binding of said silver or said polymer, which is substantially photostable upon drying of said material comprising the hydrophilic, amphoteric or anionic polymer, but which will dissociate to release said silver upon rehydration of said material.

15 2. The method of claim 1 wherein said material is used in a medical device.

3. The method of claim 1 wherein said material is used in a wound dressing.

4. The method of claim 1 wherein said material is used in an ostomy device.

20 5. The method of claim 1 wherein said source of silver comprises a silver salt.

25 6. The method of claim 5 wherein said silver salt is selected from the group consisting of silver nitrate, silver chloride, silver sulphates, silver lactate, silver bromide, silver acetate and/or mixtures of said salts.

7. The method of claim 1 wherein said agent is selected from the group consisting of ammonium salts, thiosulphates, chlorides and peroxides.

30 8. The method of claim 7 wherein said agent is a metal halide.

9. The method of claim 7 wherein said ammonium salt is selected from ammonium chloride, ammonium acetate, ammonium carbonate, ammonium sulphate and/or mixtures of said salts.

5 10. The method of claim 1 wherein said polymer comprises a polysaccharide or modified polysaccharide, a polyvinylpyrrolidone, a polyvinyl alcohol, a polyvinyl ether, a polyurethane, a polyacrylate, a polyacrylamide, collagen, or gelatin or mixtures thereof.

10 11. The method of claim 1 wherein said polysaccharide comprises a carboxymethylcellulose, or alginate or mixtures thereof.

12. The method of claim 1 wherein said organic solvent is selected from the group consisting of industrial methylated spirit, denatured ethanol, methanol, acetone, isopropyl alcohol and ethanol.

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